



Exploration Essentials Values of the Atlantic District of The Wesleyan Church



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If you have men who will only come if they know there is a good road, I don't want them. I want men who will come if there is no road at all. David Livingstone, the great missionary explorer of Africa in the 19th century first spoke these words. If you have the courage and character necessary, we invite you join us to take up these essential values in the Kingdom exploration of the Atlantic District. We cannot guarantee it will be a good road, but we can guarantee it will be a journey worth taking.

The Atlantic District has a clear mission:

*Transforming lives, churches, and communities
through the hope and holiness of Jesus Christ,
celebrating every time a disciple is made
and a church is multiplied.*

Walt's brother, Roy Disney, and co-founder of Disney Productions once said, "It is not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are." And for this defined group of people we call the Atlantic District of The Wesleyan Church we want to be clear about which values reflect our core convictions to guide and motivate our leaders. When we lack clarity and alignment on the right values needed to fuel our motivation, we will eventually fall prey to the temptation to maintain the status-quo and give only lip-service in how it appears to fulfill our shared mission.

A Brief History of the Birth of our Values

The organizational session of our antecedent denomination convened when about 75 delegates assembled in the vestry of the new Main Street Baptist Church in Woodstock, New Brunswick on Thursday, November 1, 1888, at 2:30 p.m. In this this inaugural delegation of what we now call the Atlantic District of The Wesleyan Church, were five Free Christian Baptist ministers who had just been disfellowshipped from their denomination for the "heresy" of teaching entire and instantaneous sanctification. It was less than two weeks before, that one of those five ministers, Rev. George W. MacDonald, accepted the invitation on October 20th to become the pastor of Main Street Baptist, thus forming what would soon become the first congregation and pastoral appointment of this emerging Alliance.

The organizational meeting that day began with the following motion by Rev. MacDonald, "That it is the opinion of this meeting the time has come when friends of the Holiness movement should seek to make a more united and earnest effort for the dissemination of the doctrine and experience of Bible Holiness." The motion was carried unanimously, and a new denomination was born which merged in 1966 with the Wesleyan Methodist Church in anticipation of the birth of another. And so, in 1968, more than 50 years ago, the Wesleyan Methodist and Pilgrim Holiness denominations merged on June 26, 1968, to form The Wesleyan Church.

In that November 1st organizational meeting more than 125 years ago, Rev. G.W. MacDonald spoke prophetically when he declared, "The fact that so many of **the same mind and heart have come together** to consider what kind of a union we should have, argues well for future success." Our fourth and longest serving District Superintendent of 28 years, Rev. H. R.

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Ingersoll, out of great vision and timely skill as a leader over several years, led our budding movement to link with others of **the same mind and heart** in the spirit Rev. G. W. MacDonald expressed at the conception of our humble beginning in the 19th century.

Our shared core values align us for the journey of exploration ahead. And the anointing, favour, Kingdom fruit, and power of the Holy Spirit are released for God's glory when we are of **the same mind and heart**, united around the values that He uses through us to make an eternal difference. Core values are the things that matter most. They are the things we believe and embody which supersede other good things. Someone once said that values are the invisible threads which shape culture. And whether it is the culture of 75 former Free Christian Baptists on an afternoon in 1888 in the foyer of a new church in Woodstock, or the culture of their spiritual descendants in more than 50 churches with 9,000-10,000 who worship on any given weekend – it is shared values which inform behaviour more than anything else in the life of a defined group of people.

Our Invitation to Kingdom Leaders

Simon Sinek said it so well, "People don't buy *what* you do, they buy *why* you do it. And what you do [Simon says], *simply proves what you believe.*" Why are core values so important? They are the why (values) behind the what (mission) for the how (strategy) and the when (measures) so that the where (vision) is a destination worthy of Kingdom exploration (Will Mancini, *Auxano* Vision Frame). We unapologetically draw a line in the sand of our priorities to declare these six values are **core** – they are what matters most, and God being our helper will come to characterize everything we do. Peter Drucker teaches that culture eats strategy for breakfast. Mission-driven strategy is a good start, but the passion and impact of values-driven vision eclipses it every time.

These invisible threads are not simply what we do – they characterize the heart of everything we do. As Proverbs 4:23 wisely instructs, "*Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*" Depending on the leader or the church, some of these six values are more aspirational than actual, but our starting point is a clear declaration of the priorities that will shape who we increasingly become in returning to Kingdom movement over denominational model.

To borrow from the words of David Livingstone, if there are so-called leaders who will only come with us if they know there is a good road, we don't want them. The Atlantic District wants women and men who will come even if there is no road at all! So – *if you dare* – we welcome you to join us in this journey of Kingdom exploration.